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ABSTRACT

Examples of three behaviorally disordered students are used to describe the level system (in which the student moves from level 1, with much external control, to level 6, which is self management) at the Greene County Learning Center (Xenia, OH). The six guidelines for the center are outlined and the components of the level system are listed as follows: contingency contracting, data collection, academic performance, peer ratings, reinforcement of behavior change, and development of responsible behavior. It is explained that for one student an individual reinforcer list was used, in which the child chose his own reward (from a selection listed in a file box) for correct response to his list of behaviors. The author states that movement from one level to a higher one is determined by ratings of peers, actual social behaviors during the day, and the student's academic performance. Freedoms are contingent on behavior, which is agreed on in a contract between the teacher and student the author explains. Included are the forms used for each of the levels, the daily subject contract, the peer rating sheet, the daily behavior summary sheet, charts, graphs, continuous recording reliability forms, and the merit/demerit recording forms. (PHR)

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THE LEVEL SYSTEM

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Todd has problems staying in his carrel. He stands on his chair. He does a flip from his chair onto the floor outside the carrel, laughing as he performs this, he jumps from the top of his carrel, to the floor landing on his feet (eyes watching to see if everyone notices), rolls on the floor outside of his carrel, to try to do his academic work.

Greg swears out loud to himself. Greg writes swear words on each written paper he does. Greg writes swear words on every item of his belongings and on his carrel.

Steven distracts other students in the class. He taps on his carrel, kicks carrel, calls to them across the room, throws objects across the room, swears for a laugh, runs out of carrel at any instance. He fights with other students unloading or loading on the bus. He refuses to do what authority figures tell him by hitting them, swearing at them, folding arms across chest, beating on carrel to the point of marring it, and continues this behavior during time outs.

The vehicle for each of these three students to learn to acquire appropriate behavior is the Greene County Learning Center's level system. This system was written and adapted by Doris Purdom, the Center's Director.

This level system includes the following, as listed in the Center's guidelines:

1. Clearly stated re-entry objectives that are developed jointly between teachers and students.

2. Data-based processes that facilitate decisions about student progress.

3. Data-based processes that demonstrate to students that they are controlling their own progress.

4. Responsibility for data collection can be shifted from teachers to students.

5. Behavioral programs that gradually remove artificial, external controls and replace them with self management.

6. A process that gradually allows more freedom but requires and reinforces more responsible behavior.

The basic components of this level system are contingency contracting, data collection, academic performance, peer ratings, reinforcing behavior change, and building responsible behavior.

Utilizing the features of this level system, the teacher and aide instituted a program of intervention, for Todd. The system was expanded, which shows its versatility, to meet the needs of this individual student. Todd was checked each 15 minute period. For

each period, his own charted behavior agreed with the teacher he could add a star to his graph at the end of each day.

An individual reinforcer list was used for Todd. If Todd responded to the following behaviors and teacher response correctly, he got to chose from a card file his reinforcement reward.

1. Standing on chair
   Teacher verbally remind him
2. Jumping from chair to floor
   Time out each time it occurs for five minutes
3. Laying on floor outside carrel
   Teacher place gentle hand on shoulder and verbally remind Todd to get in chair
4. Leave carrel at any time without permission
   Teacher verbally remind him - and/or teacher physically stand next to carrel, then verbally remind him.

In a plastic file box, Todd found these rewards:

listen to tape	treat from food box
use of record player	rocker time
extra time on tornado hill	bean bag chair time
be first in line	Legos
typewriter use	Lite-Brite
recording on tape	going into another carrel

Baseline recording showed a weighted occurrence of 9.45. Following this baseline period, and continuing for five days, the teacher and aide provided immediate reinforcement for appropriate behavior. During this period, the total weighted occurrence was reduced to a total of 3.15. In order to discover if the reinforcement procedure was in fact the critical factor that produced the increase in compliant behavior, the teacher and aide responded to the student as they had done during the original baseline period. The weighted occurrence during this second baseline period showed a steady increase in non-compliant behavior, at a weighted occurrence average total of 6.76. The reinforcement procedure was then reintroduced, with the result of a weighted occurrence average of 3.56. This reversal procedure provided evidence that the immediate reinforcement was indeed increasing the desired behavior.

Todd has moved to level 3 behavior, with this intervention.

What are the levels?

What do they specifically contain?

The level system includes six basic levels beginning with much external control and progressing toward greater internal motivation, and self-management.

(From Greene County Learning Center Guidelines)

LEVEL I: academic and social behaviors monitored, recorded and graphed by the staff; student earns points on a period to period basis which are exchanged for privileges - reinforcing immediately. (Figure 1)

LEVEL II: Student functions on a more delayed reinforcement basis - points a student earns for a full day are used to obtain all privileges and activities for the next day. Students on level two graph their own behavior during the day end conferences. (Figure 2)

LEVEL III: Student earns his points on a weekly basis. The student now charts and graphs his behavior each day. The staff still monitors his own behavior. (Figure 3)

LEVEL IV: The student is off the point system. He works on a merit and demerit system. The student receives a merit for appropriate behavior during an entire class time block. This differs from points which are awarded on an immediate basis. This merit-demerit system of reinforcement is not as tightly controlled nor as closely monitored. The level four students have more freedom in the classroom - are responsible for recording, graphing, and monitoring their own behavior with periodic checks by teachers. Beginning with this level four, the student starts to have experiences in his or a neighboring school. (Figure 4) (Figure 14)

LEVEL V: The student monitors, graphs, and records his own behavior - with occasional reliability checks. All activities are available without any contingency arrangement. Privileges are earned a week in advance. Student begins to have one or two periods per day in his home school. (Figure 5)

LEVEL VI: Student is completely on his own to monitor, record and graph his own behavior. Staff gives demerits only for gross violations of rules. Student may attend home school for a longer portion of the day. Student contracts for re-entry into mainstream for two week probationary period - at which time he continues to monitor, record and graph his behavior. (Figure 6)

Three factors determine the progression of a student from one level to another. These are ratings of their behaviors by their peers, actual social behaviors during the school day, and their academic performance.

The specific criterion for advancing from level-to-level differs for each student and is based on baseline of pre-program level of functioning.

Greg's swearing was reduced by using these basic elements of the level system. As with each student, Greg entered the center on level one. He agreed on the terms of his contingency contract with the teacher. This agreement clearly states what has to be accomplished in order to progress from one level to the next higher one. (Figures 1 - 6)

It includes behaviors in areas of appropriate and inappropriate social interactions, in school and on the bus. As you can see, Greg's points for the bus are listed according to the time spent on the bus. Both the teacher and the aide sign the contract and it

is placed on the levels board with his graphs and calendar.

Greg's behavior is charted throughout the day by both the teacher and aide. This data collection does not interfere with teaching and is simple enough so the student can later assume responsibility for its collection. For this reason, the aide in the room is designated as the primary data collector.

There are five inappropriate categories -

AG - aggression

IV - inappropriate verbalization

IL - inappropriate locale

DI - distraction

NC - non-compliance

The five appropriate categories are -

RA - responding appropriately

ST - extra effort

PT - polite talk

EX - ignoring

NR - normative

Each teacher and aide has a 15-inch clipboard with a data sheet listing pupils names. As each behavior occurs, the code for the behavior is recorded in the current time interval. (Figure 10)

Reliability between the teacher and aide are frequently checked. The aides periodically exchange rooms for a class session to observe and record behaviors simultaneously but independent of the teacher.

The formula used for reliability is

$$\frac{\text{agreements}}{(\text{agreements}+\text{disagreements}) \times 100} = \%\ \text{reliability agreement}$$

The weighted occurrence is average of occurrences between the teacher and aide. (Figures 12-13)

Each student, has clear, well defined academic objectives, from his assessment. On their contracts, each student must complete daily tasks to earn their contract for the day. In Greg's case, his objective includes "no written swear words on his academic papers". Steve "will complete all academics without verbal, physical or written aggression."

Freedoms are contingent on behavior. Level one students must ask permission to talk and remain in their carrel, only leaving when they ask permission. After these two requirements are accomplished, privileges are negotiated for level two behavior. These privileges often come from individual reinforcer lists.

During the entire day, the students are involved in five different situations that are non-structured -

1. bus transportation
2. breaks-exercises
3. lunch
4. physical education
5. activity periods.

The students evaluate each other during these times on a peer rating sheet each day. The entire class rates three students each day, on the sheet given them after lunch. The names are randomly selected. (Figure 8)

The rating scale is as follows:

I - poorest rating and person giving this rating must explain why specifically

II - more inappropriate behavior but some appropriate

III - equally occurring appropriate and inappropriate behavior

IV - more appropriate behavior than inappropriate

V - best rating - denoting excellent compliance with school rules

N/A - is marked for non-applicable, when a student has not been involved with this student being rated in a given situation.

To control for positive and negative effects by friends or enemies that result from unrealistic marking, 5 ratings of 1 and 5 ratings of 5 are automatically dropped.

The ratings are totalled and divided by the number of students rating that day to arrive at an average rating. They are attached to the daily behavior summary sheet and filed. (Figure 9)

Peer ratings are important. Students become aware their behavior does matter to others during these unstructured times. As Greg said, surprised one day, "What! He rates me! !" with eyes wide open and index finger pointed at the other student.

Todd is progressing on Level 3 behavior. He is staying in his seat during academic periods. He has moved to working at the table with one other student during academics. He has begun to chart his own behavior. He moves a little more slowly - walks across the room, instead of running. He has been accepted as a partner in social interaction in the classroom by the students. He is being shown some consideration now. His foster parents report that at home he is much calmer, satisfied, and thinking of the future, as opposed to thoughts of only "now".

As Mrs. Purdom states in the Center's guidelines, "The student needs to learn to behave appropriately in relatively non-structured, non-controlled situations - situations which offer more freedom to students because they are not controlled by teachers or other external agents. With the level system, a student progresses from Level I, where he experiences much teacher direction and control, through successive levels where many more freedoms and responsibilities are enjoyed."

The Greene County Learning Center uses the level system as only a vehicle for a graphic representation to the child. It is the constructive interpersonal, interaction of the child with his parents, teachers, and peers that is the crucial factor.

INCLUDING THESE FORMS-

Figures 1 through 6. . . . . Level System Contracts

Figure 7 . . . . . Daily Subject Contract

Figure 8 . . . . . Peer Rating Sheet

Figure 9 . . . . . Daily Behavior Summary

Figure 10. . . . . Charts - AM and PM

Figure 11. . . . . Graph

Figures 12-13. . . . . Continuous Recording Reliability

Figure 14. . . . . Merit/Demerit Recording Form

CONTRACT FOR RESPONSIBILITIES LEVELS

I, _____, contract to become responsible for my behavior at school and on the bus. If I am able to demonstrate my responsible behavior adequately, I may progress from Level 1 to Level 2.

The specific requirements are as follows:

1. Social Behaviors:

In order for me to progress to Level 2, I must be able to receive no more than _____ inappropriate marks and at least _____ appropriate marks on my graph for eight out of ten days.

2. Academic Behaviors:

In order for me to progress to Level 2, I need to earn my points each period for eight out of ten days.

3. Peer Ratings:

In order for me to progress to Level 2, my peers must rate my behavior, both at school and on the bus, as being at least an average of _____ on the peer rating sheets for a period of two weeks. It will automatically be rejected for level change if I receive any ratings of 1.

I understand that I must meet criterion for my social behavior, academic behavior, and peer ratings during the same two week period to progress to Level 2.

If I successfully complete the above requirements, I will be able to move from Level 1 to Level 2 and participate in the responsibilities and privileges of that level.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 197___.

_____
Student

_____
Teacher

FIGURE 1 : Contracts Level 1

CONTRACT FOR RESPONSIBILITIES LEVELS (LEVEL 2)

I, _____, contract to become responsible for my behavior at school and on the bus. If I am able to demonstrate my responsible behavior adequately, I may progress from Level 2 to Level 3.

The specific requirements are as follows:

1. Social Behaviors:

In order for me to progress to Level 3, I must be able to receive no more than _____ inappropriate marks and at least _____ appropriate marks on my graph for eight out of ten days.

2. Academic Behaviors:

In order for me to progress to Level 3, I need to earn my points each period for eight out of ten days.

3. Peer Ratings:

In order for me to progress to Level 3, my peers must rate my behavior, both at school and on the bus, as being at least an average of _____ on the peer rating sheets for a period of two weeks. I will automatically be rejected for level change if I receive any ratings of 1.

I understand that I must meet criterion for my social behavior, academic behavior, and peer ratings during the same two week period to progress to Level 3.

If I successfully complete the above requirements, I will be able to move from Level 2 to Level 3 and participate in the responsibilities and privileges of that level.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 197___.

_____
Student

_____
Teacher

FIGURE 2: Contracts Level II

CONTRACT FOR RESPONSIBILITIES LEVELS 3

I, _____, contract to become responsible for my behavior at school and on the bus. If I am able to demonstrate my responsible behavior adequately, I may progress from Level 3 to Level 4.

The specific requirements are as follows:

1. Social Behaviors:

In order for me to progress to Level 4, I must be able to receive no more than _____ inappropriate marks and at least _____ appropriate marks on my graph for 16 out of 20 days or 12 days consecutively.

2. Academic Behaviors:

In order for me to progress to Level 4, I need to earn my points each period for 16 out of 20 days or 12 days consecutively.

3. Peer Ratings:

In order for me to progress to Level 4, my peers must rate my behavior both at school and on the bus, as being at least an average of _____ on the peer rating sheets for a period of 16 out of 20 days or 12 days consecutively. I will automatically be rejected for level change if I receive any ratings of 1.

I understand that I must meet criterion for my social behavior, academic behavior, and peer ratings during the same period of time to progress to Level 4.

If I successfully complete the above requirements, I will be able to move from Level 3 to Level 4 and participate in the responsibilities and privileges of that level.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 197___.

_____
Student

_____
Teacher

FIGURE 3 : Contracts Level III

CONTRACT FOR RESPONSIBILITIES LEVELS 4

I, _____, contract to become responsible for my behavior at school and on the bus. If I am able to demonstrate my responsible behavior adequately, I may progress from Level 4 to Level 5.

The specific requirements are as follows:

1. Social Behaviors:

In order for me to progress to Level 5, I must be able to receive no more than _____ demerits and at least _____ merits on my graph for 8 out of 10 days or 6 days consecutively.

2. Academic Behaviors:

In order for me to progress to Level 5, I need to complete my assignment each period for 8 out of 10 days or 6 days consecutively.

3. Peer Ratings:

In order for me to progress to Level 5, my peers must rate my behavior, both at school and on the bus, as being at least an average of _____ on the peer rating sheets. I will automatically be rejected for Level change if I receive any ratings of 1.

I understand that I must meet criterion for my social behavior, academic behavior, and peer ratings during the same period of time to progress to Level 5.

If I successfully complete the above requirements, I will be able to move from Level 4 to Level 5 and participate in the responsibilities and privileges of that Level.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 197__.

_____
Student

_____
Teacher

FIGURE 4 Contracts Level IV

CONTRACT FOR RESPONSIBILITIES LEVELS 5

I, _____, contract to become responsible for my behavior at school and on the bus. If I am able to demonstrate my responsible behavior adequately, I may progress from Level 5 to Level 6.

The specific requirements are as follows:

1. Social Behaviors:

In order for me to progress to Level 6, I must be able to receive no more than _____ demerits and at least _____ merits on my graph for 8 out of 10 days or 6 days consecutively.

2. Academic Behaviors:

In order for me to progress to Level 6, I need to complete my assignment each period for 8 out of 10 days or 6 days consecutively.

3. Peer Ratings:

In order for me to progress to Level 6, my peers must rate my behavior, both at school and on the bus, as being at least an average of _____ on the peer rating sheets. I will automatically be rejected for level change if I receive any ratings of 1.

I understand that I must meet criterion for my social behavior, academic behavior, and peer ratings during the same period of time to progress to Level 6.

If I successfully complete the above requirements, I will be able to move from Level 5 to Level 6 and participate in the responsibilities and privileges of that Level.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 197___.

_____
Student

_____
Teacher

FIGURE 5 : Contracts Level V

CONTRACT FOR RESPONSIBILITIES LEVELS 6

I, _____, contract to become responsible for my behavior at school and on the bus. If I am able to demonstrate my responsible behavior adequately, I may go back to my regular school.

The specific requirements are as follows:

1. Social Behaviors:

In order for me to go back to my regular school, I must be able to receive no more than _____ demerits and at least _____ merits on my graph for 16 out of 20 days or 12 days consecutively.

2. Academic Behaviors:

In order for me to go back to my regular school, I need to complete my assignments each period for 16 out of 20 days or 12 days consecutively.

3. Peer Ratings:

In order for me to go back to my regular school, my peers must rate my behavior, both at school and on the bus, as being at least an average of _____ on the peer sheets. I will automatically be rejected for level change if I receive any ratings of 1.

I understand that I must meet criterion for my social behavior, academic behavior, and peer ratings during the same period of time to go back to my regular school.

If I successfully complete the above requirements, I will be able to go back to my regular school.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 197___.

_____
Student

_____
Teacher

FIGURE 6 . Contracts Level VI

DAILY SUBJECT CONTRACT

NAME_____ DATE_____

SUBJECT_____ COMPLETE_____

1._____ _____

_____ _____

2._____ _____

_____ _____

3._____ _____

_____ _____

Teacher_____ Student_____

FIGURE 7

RATER_____

DATE _____

NAME:_____

PEER RATINGS

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
BREAKS						
LUNCH						
BUS						
Phys. Ed						
REINFORCEMENT						

TOTAL RATINGS_____ TOTAL COLUMNS_____

NAME:_____

PEER RATINGS

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
BREAKS						
LUNCH						
BUS						
Phys. Ed						
REINFORCEMENT						

TOTAL RATINGS_____ TOTAL COLUMNS_____

NAME:_____

PEER RATINGS

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
BREAKS						
LUNCH						
BUS						
Phys. Ed						
REINFORCEMENT						

TOTAL RATINGS_____ TOTAL COLUMNS_____

FIGURE 8

DAILY BEHAVIORAL SUMMARY SHEET

GROUP: Pre-Vocational DATE: _____

NAME	MARKS	TOTAL POINTS	RATING POINTS AVE.	OBJECTIVES MET.?
	+ / -			
	+ / -			
	+ / -			
	+ / -			
	+ / -			
	+ / -			
	+ / -			
	+ / -			
	+ / -			

CRITICAL INCIDENTS or COMMENTS:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

FIGURE 9

DATE _____

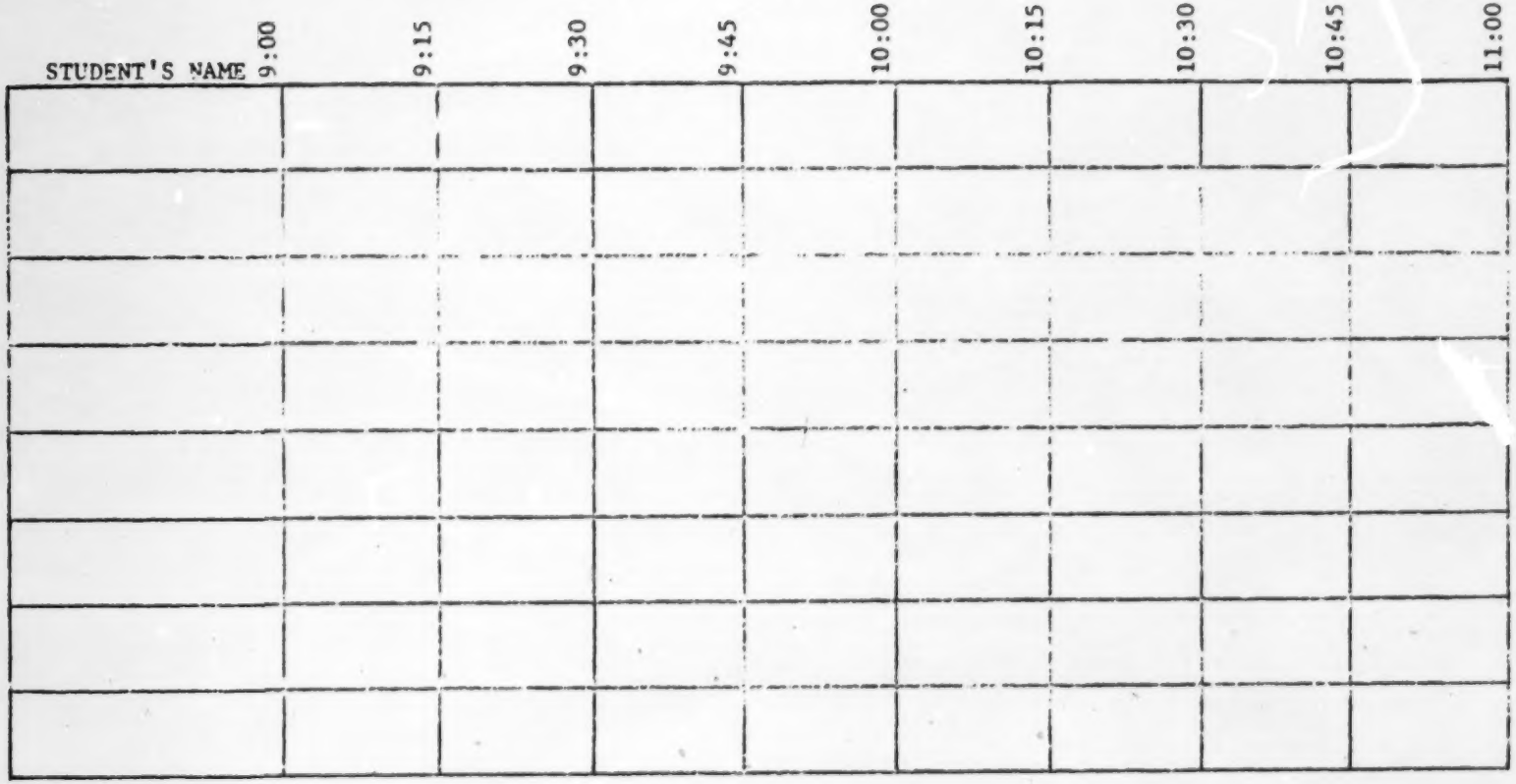


FIGURE 10

Observer _____

DATE _____

STUDENT'S NAME	11:15	11:30	12:30	12:45	1:00	1:15	1:30	1:45

FIGURE 10

Observer _____

Points
Peer Ratings

NAME: _____
Level: _____
Date _____

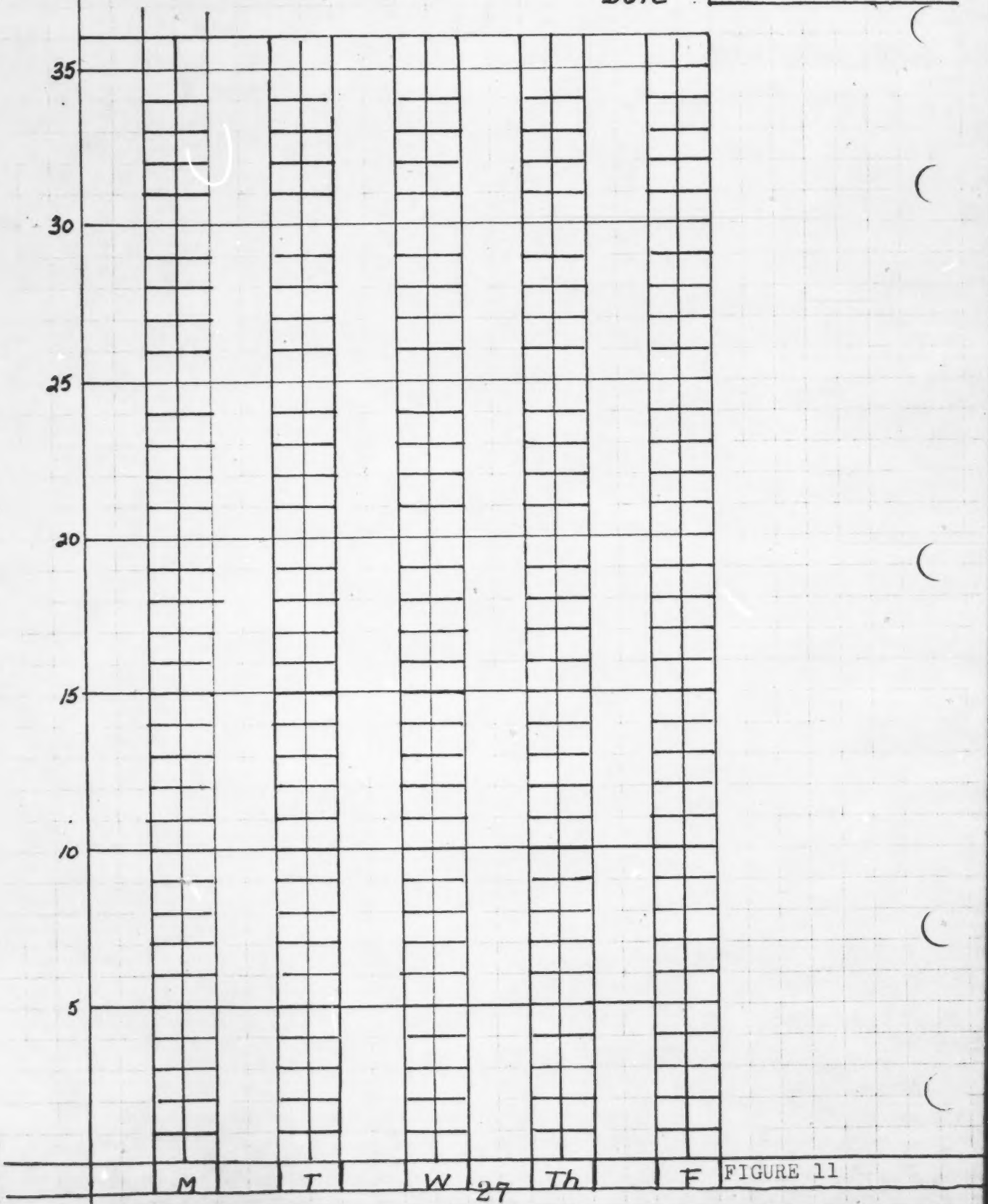


FIGURE 11

DATA COLLECTION - Two Independent Observers

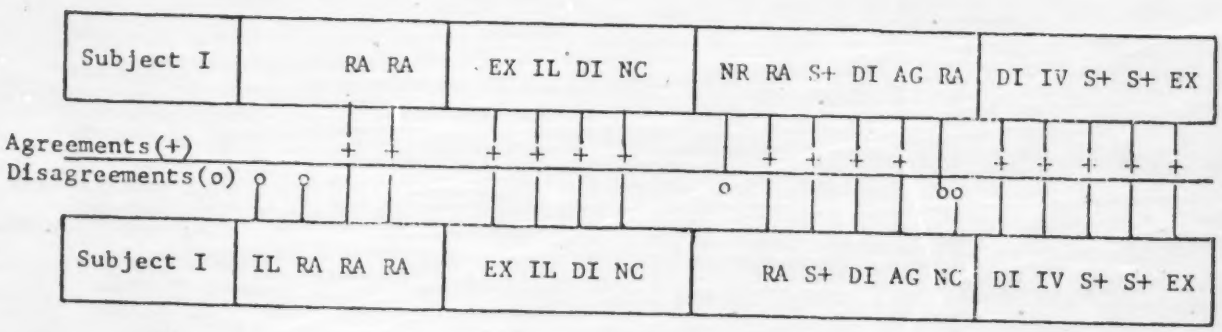
Subject I	RA RA	EX IL DI NC	NR RA S+ DI AG RA	DI IV S+ S+ EX

Data Collected By Observer A

Subject I	IL RA RA RA	EX IL DI NC	RA S+ DI AG NC	DI IV S+ S+ EX

Data Collected By Observer B

PAIRED AGREEMENTS AND DATA COMPARISON



FORMULA FOR CALCULATING RELIABILITY

$$\frac{\text{(Agreements)}}{\text{(Agreements + Disagreements)}} \times 100 = \text{\% Agreement}$$

EXAMPLE

$$\frac{15}{20} \times 100 = 75\% \text{ Agreement}$$

FIGURE 12. Teacher/Observer Reliability Calculation Procedures

NAME _____ DATE _____

SUBJECT	DEMERITS - COMMENTS	MERITS - COMMENTS	SIGN.
	----------	----------	
	----------	----------	
	----------	----------	
	----------	----------	
	----------	----------	
	----------	----------	
	----------	----------	

FIGURE 14